



San Diego Public Library's *Wangenheim Room* proudly presents:

Bringing the Word to the People: The Evolution of the Bible as a Book

with

Dr. Rebecca Moore

Department of Religious Studies, San Diego State University



Printing is one of the most important technical advances in history. The Bible was the first major book printed in the West in 1454--5 by Johann Gutenberg who perfected the movable type in the 1450s. This made the mass production of books possible. Before that first printing of the Bible, the earliest scriptures people had were on scrolls, codices (bound manuscripts) and hand-lettered volumes, rather than in books; and people only had access to scripture in synagogues, churches, and monasteries. The printing press revolutionized access to the Bible, and Christianity, and to a much lesser extent Judaism, changed dramatically as a result of people being able to read the texts themselves, in book form. Without the book, many developments in history would not have occurred. The story of biblical printing and the evolution of the Bible as a book is a fascinating account of how technology can transform faith in significant ways.

The *Wangenheim Room* is San Diego Public Library's special collection of rare books and manuscripts, which features the history of writing and printing. Unique treasures include a 13th century Bible written on parchment, original leaves from famous Bibles that date from 1121 to 1935, and a rare facsimile edition of Gutenberg's famed Bible of 1455. These items will be on exhibit by mid-May in the Wangenheim Room.



Dr. Rebecca Moore is Associate Professor of Religious Studies at SDSU. Professor Moore is Past President of the Society for the Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages and has served on the Steering Committee for the "History of Interpretation" Section of the national Society for Biblical Literature.

Wednesday, May 26, 2004

6:30 – 8:30 pm

San Diego Public Library

Central Library – Auditorium

820 'E' Street, (619-527-3405)

<http://www.sandiego.gov/public-library/>



"Stories of Faith" is one of eight projects statewide funded by the California Council for the Humanities under its "California Stories: Communities Speak" program. Information about "Stories of Faith" activities is available on the web (<http://www.sandiego.gov/public-library/news-events/>).